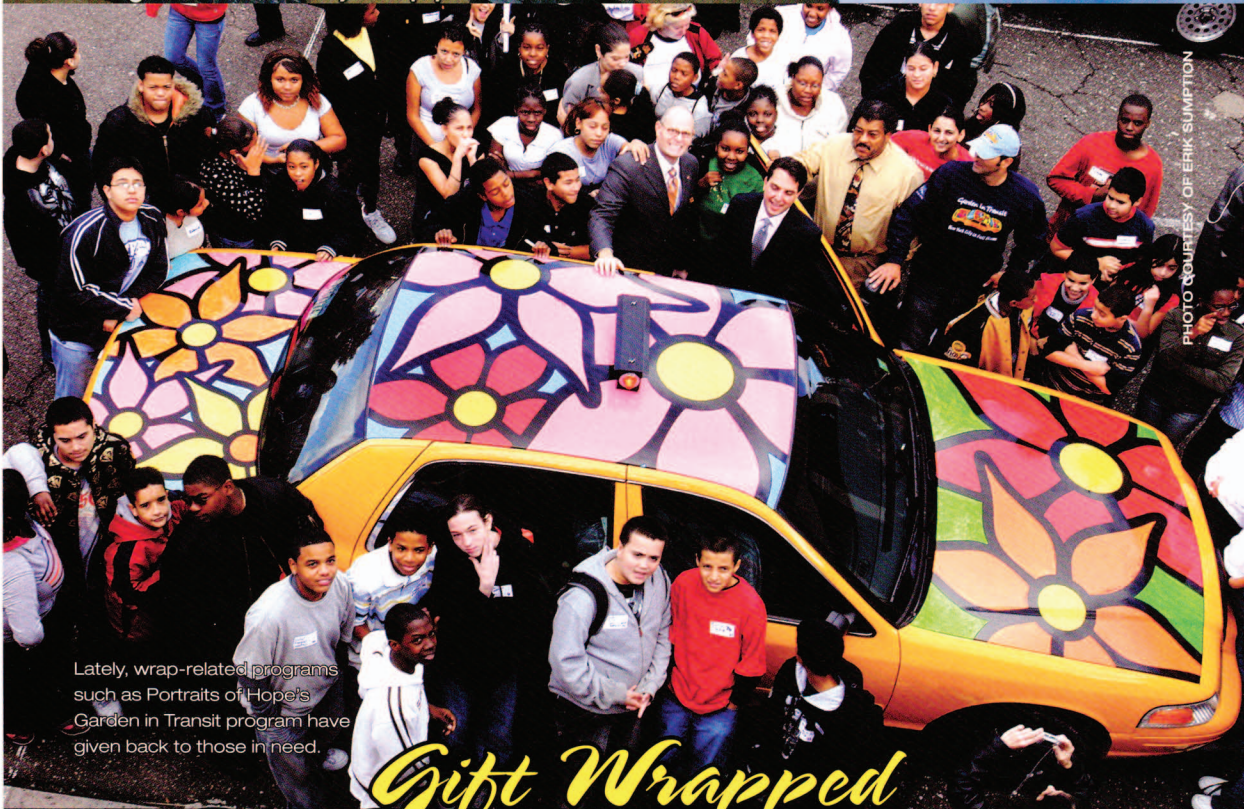


# WRAPS

The magazine for the vinyl wrap professional

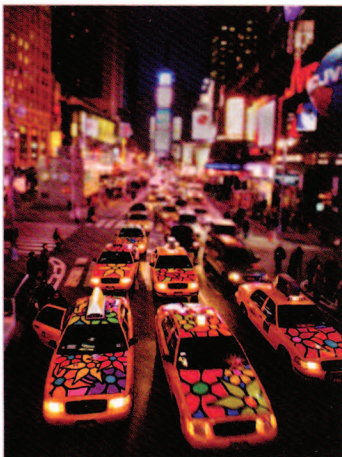


Lately, wrap-related programs such as Portraits of Hope's Garden in Transit program have given back to those in need.

## Gift Wrapped ACROSS THE MAP

Wrap companies go the extra mile for charitable organizations.

By Ryan N. Fugler



The 2007 Garden in Transit program allowed kids from New York, Ohio, California and Pennsylvania to decorate the vinyl for 13,000 New York City taxi cabs.

**I**N THIS WORLD of ups and downs, no one is immune to falling on hard times. Life can certainly present many kinds of difficulties such as poverty, disease and more. Fortunately, there are organizations that serve to help those in need, choosing charity over money-bundled prosperity. It's also encouraging to find that some wraps companies are committed to supporting such institutions by supplying attention-getting projects.

Perhaps it takes more than one person to change the world; it's said that two heads are better than one. So when several groups come together to reinforce the greater good, it makes life and its let-downs much easier to handle. In the recent past, designers, graphics providers, wrap product manufacturers, and non-profit organizations and charities have shown how even the wraps industry can assist the less fortunate. And the demonstration of generosity has spanned the continent.

### WILD, WILD WEST

It seems there is always more than enough excitement occurring out west: swimming pools, movie stars, and of course, a bevy of casino-rich locations and sleek-styled automobiles. It really *is* wild out west, a fast-paced environment full of the hottest trends and most luxurious lifestyles. However, that doesn't mean that all West Coasters are self-centered – quite the contrary, in fact.

At San Pedro, Calif.-based VIP Graphix, wrap jobs are completed with skill and precision. Though the company's work is beginning to create a buzz in the wrap community, owner Rick Lawler would prefer that his six-person shop remain an efficient operation rather than an over-expanded production house.

"We're just a small company; we're staying small and not trying to go mainstream," he says. "When you go mainstream you're in it for the money and your quality level goes down."





MACTac's IMAGin B-Free graphic film was the material of choice for Portraits of Hope while Mario Bocconcelli of Applied Graphics headed up the installation effort.

Lawler's philosophy has allowed VIP to gain some noteworthy projects that have not only enhanced his company's name but enriched the lives of many in the surrounding areas. The all-encompassing success started when Lawler and his crew completed a wrap for Beverly Hills Lamborghini. The gorgeously decorated vehicle competed in the annual Gumball race which opened the door for Lawler to meet Child Safety Network (CSN) CEO Ward Leber.

Joining forces with Leber to create wrap projects to benefit CSN, VIP then completed a Lamborghini Gallardo wrap for CSN's Signature Series, a program that raises funds through the auctioning of celebrity-autographed wrapped vehicles.

"The Gallardo toured all over and celebrities like Hugh Hefner, Keifer Sutherland and Dakota Fanning signed it," says Lawler.



A wide range of children helped complete the Garden in Transit project by painting onto the vinyl. Not to be restricted by any handicaps, some kids used elongated brushes or mouthbrushes to complete the job.



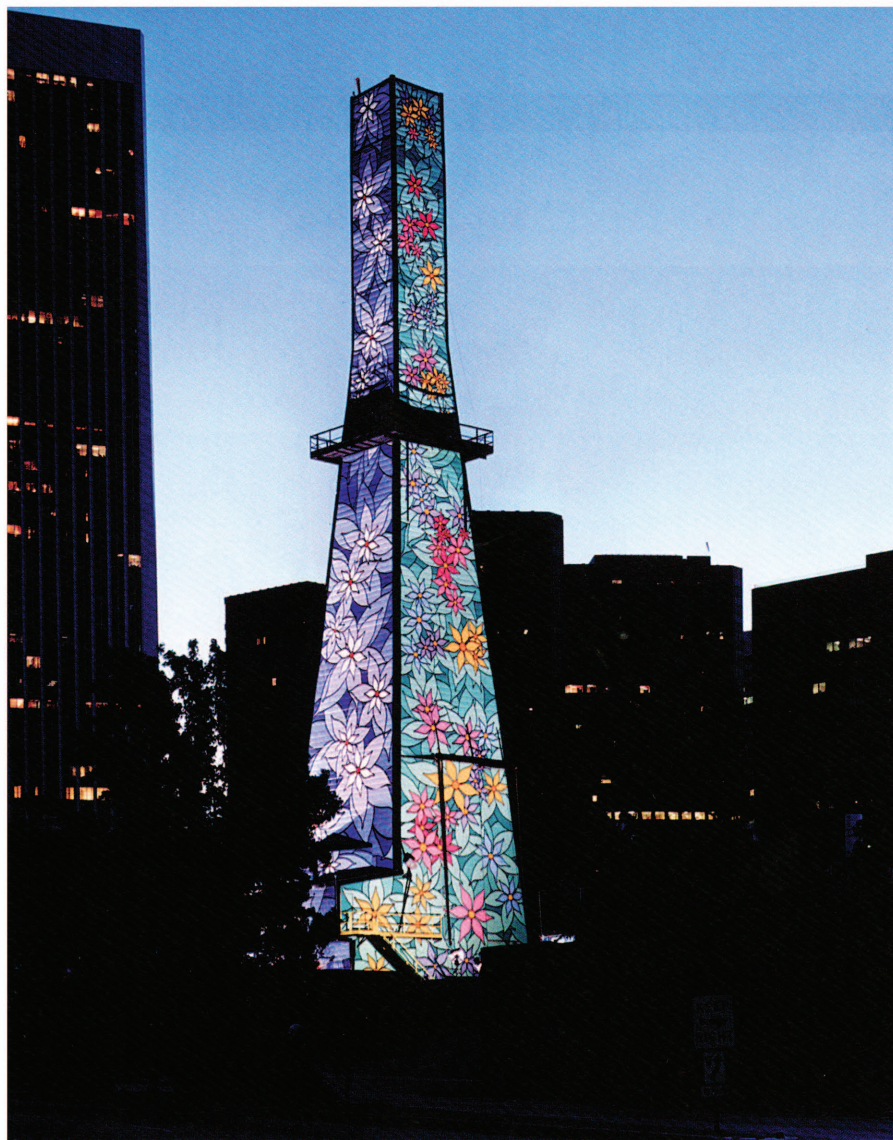


PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM BONNER

In 2000, the Tower of Hope program focused on wrapping the L.A. Tower with a colorful mosaic of graphics.

that she became the first person to sign the Country Music Truck. Others, including Rodney Atkins, Taylor Swift and the band Little Big Town, followed in the autographing.

And as the music played loudly down south, the north had begun making some wrap noise of its own. In the province of Ontario, Canada, wraps to benefit charities and non-profits became prevalent with the efforts of Mississauga-based Southwood Graphics. The Make-A-Wish Foundation found itself as one recipient of Southwood's endeavor in reaching out to the community.

"In Ontario there is a large trucking show that draws in hundreds of trucking companies," says Joe Griffin, customer care team member of Southwood Graphics. "While there, we were approached by NAL Path Insurance that worked with Make-A-Wish to help put this fundraiser together."

Southwood, which dedicates about 90 percent of its business to fleet graphics, gladly accepted the proposal and quickly embraced the project. Mainly revolving



Southwood Graphics provided the hockey rink board graphics for the 2008 Teen Ranch Foundation Celebrity Hockey Gala.



Avery provided the graphics for the hockey rink which were laminated with Avery DOL 1000 overlamine so they could be used for several months after the event.



around a 53-foot trailer wrap, which was donated by a local dealership, the graphics were printed using a 54-inch Roland SOLJET Pro II printer and installed in a 12-hour period. Avery Graphics, always available to support Southwood, provided Avery MPI 1005 EZ film and DOL 1000 overlamine for the project. Now readily seen on the open roadways, the trailer is leased out to numerous companies in an effort to reinforce the Make-A-Wish name and purpose. To date, the trailer wrap has helped raise \$30,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

"Financially, over the last two years we've been in a position to give back to the community," says Griffin. "It's something the ownership has always wanted to do."

But the giving didn't stop there. Southwood banked on a consistent moneymaker in Canadian sports to complete its next charitable task. By tapping into the region's love for hockey, Southwood immersed itself in its passion for giving.

"The owners of Southwood, Jeff and Sonia Stairs, know well the cost of advertising, and every dollar counts for charitable

organizations," says Griffin. "Wraps are a very effective tool to get the message out to the public."

So when the Teen Ranch Foundation required hockey rink board graphics for its 2008 Celebrity Hockey Gala game, touting hockey veterans like Rick Vaive and Stu Grimson, Southwood didn't hesitate to contribute. Again, joining up with Avery Graphics – a company that Griffin labels "a great partner" – Southwood began fabricating graphics for the event which would be dedicated to getting teens back on track.

"The graphics were digitally printed on a pressure-sensitive Avery cast film with vinyl overlamine," says Griffin. "We went with the vinyl overlamine because the graphics were to stay up for three to four months after the Celebrity game."

However, the job required more finesse than anticipated as below-freezing temperatures played a factor.

"We had to warm up the boards using an industrial propane heater and work quickly before the boards chilled," says Griffin.

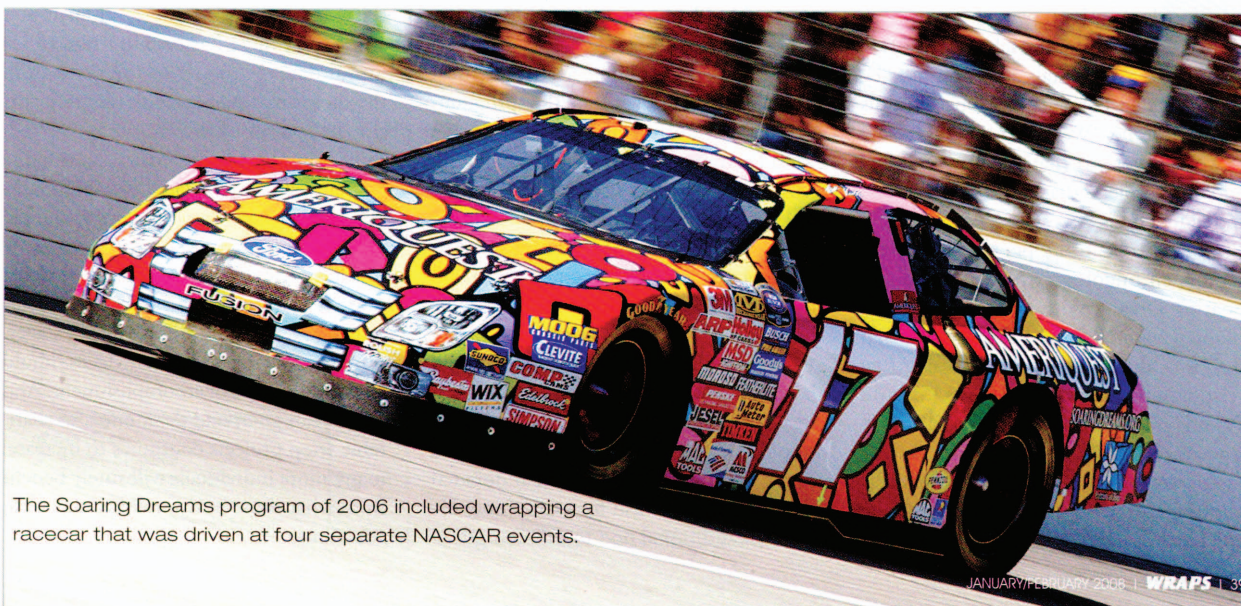
In total, Southwood spent five hours on the installation using two employees for the

labor. Griffin says the production of the graphics and affixing them to the boards was much like a vehicle wrap, with the presence of some curves and panel breaks. However, the amount of space greatly exceeded that of a vehicle, allowing high-profile advertisers such as Nike Bauer and Scotiabank to help finance the event.

"I think what it comes down to is that most people like working with and supporting vendors who are like-minded and who get behind causes that are important to them too," says Griffin. "We have come to appreciate that there are many good organizations out there working hard to make a difference in the lives of people in the community and we are privileged to be able to participate."

## EASTERN PROGRESS

As Griffin suggests, there truly *are* a number of dedicated organizations that instill hope, and perhaps confidence, into the lives of others. Take New York-based Portraits of Hope, for instance. The non-profit organization developed the Tower of Hope program in 2000, an effort to bet-



The Soaring Dreams program of 2006 included wrapping a racecar that was driven at four separate NASCAR events.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM REDMAN





PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT CAMPBELL

During the 2005 Soaring Dreams campaign, a blimp measuring 60-feet in diameter was wrapped using 50 pieces of vinyl.

ter the lives of ill children. The program consisted of wrapping the L.A. Tower with a colorful mosaic of graphics. What made this unique, and the projects launched thereafter, was that the children created the wrap's design by painting the multitude of panels by hand.

"We work with afterschool programs and children's hospitals," says Ed Massey who founded Portraits of Hope with his brother, Bernie. "We focus on learning how to work on goal orientation, team building, and huge projects that can't be done on an individual basis."

For Portraits of Hope, teamwork represents an ongoing attitude. During its Soaring Dreams endeavor – including a blimp wrap in 2005 and a NASCAR wrap in 2006 – the organization initiated crucial relationships with MACtac for its IMAGin B-Free graphic film material and Mario Bocconcelli of Applied Graphics for the installation. The partnership with MACtac allowed Portraits of Hope's participating children to paint 50 different pieces of vinyl

that covered the blimp's 60-foot diameter. Questions arose such as: *Would the blimp be air-worthy?* and *Would the clumps of paint slow it down?*

Massey answers: "The MACtac vinyl worked extremely well. The sponsors for the airship liked it so much that they left it up flying for a year."

As for Bocconcelli, he headed up most of the install work for the 2007 program, Garden in Transit, which also carried forward Portraits of Hope's relationship with MACtac. This particular project brought in kids from New York, Ohio, California and Pennsylvania to paint flower patterns on vinyl that would be wrapped on 13,000 taxis in New York City – an impressive undertaking.

"You could say there's no way we could have done it but we did," says Massey, adding that AAA Flag and Banner pitched in to provide the black printed background of the floral pattern, and Nazdar donated the clear gloss varnish for extra shine. He gives an additional nod to the strength of

MACtac's product saying, "The wear and tear on a New York City cab is as brutal as anything, but the vinyl has not peeled. It looks like it could have been applied today."

In addition, the graphics have remained crisp through car washes and customer abuse, and there has been no sign of removal damage to any of the taxis. Still, the most amazing aspect of the project is the dedication of the children involved; some bound to a wheelchair, painting the graphics with an elongated stick or mouthbrush. It's those images of strength and the emotion involved that makes being able to contribute to a higher cause that much more rewarding. To think that this wraps industry, even in its still maturing stages, can place a smile on so many faces should give us all a sense of accomplishment. And as the years go by and the number of charitable wrap projects continues to increase, many more individuals will surely benefit from what those in this market choose to contribute.

